

Amendment to the Claims

1-6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine containers in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the linear array of medicine containers in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette ~~in the linear array state~~; and

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette so as to be rotatable between a reception position and an extraction position, wherein

the discharge member includes: a holding recess portion for holding only one of the medicine containers biased by the biasing member upon rotation to the reception position and for maintaining a holding state of the held medicine container so that the medicine container can be extracted from outside upon rotation to the extraction position; and a support face formed on an opposite side relative to the holding recess portion so as to be able to support a next medicine container when the discharge member rotates to the extraction position.

8. (Currently Amended) The medicine feeder as defined in claim 7, further comprising: a medicine detection member for detecting whether or not a medicine is present in the holding recess portion when the discharge member is positioned at the extraction position; and a control device for allowing driving of the discharge member based on prescription data and a detection signal from the medicine detection member.

9. (Previously Presented) The medicine feeder as defined in claim 8, further comprising a lock member for disabling the discharge member from rotating, wherein the control device controls the lock member so as to lock the discharge member at the reception position when discharge of a prescribed quantity of medicines based on prescription data is completed.

10. (Previously Presented) The medicine feeder as defined in claim 7, wherein the discharge member has notches to facilitate holding of the medicine container, and the notches are located on opposite walls constituting the holding recess portion.

11. (Previously Presented) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine containers arranged in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the medicine containers in the linear array in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette;

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette so as to be rotatable between a reception position and an extraction position; and

a medicine quantity detection member for detecting a quantity of the medicines in the cassette;

wherein the medicine quantity detection member includes: a sensor for detecting a biased position by the biasing member in an initial state where medicines are not housed in the cassette; and an encoder for detecting a change in the position of the biasing member, caused by housing the medicines in the cassette, from the initial state detected by the sensor.

12. (Currently Amended) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing ~~medicines~~medicine containers arranged in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the ~~medicines~~medicine containers in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette while in the linear array; and

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette for holding one of the medicine containers in a holding recess portion and discharging the medicine containers one by one through rotating movement of the discharge member,

wherein the discharge member comprises a rotor, and an outer circumferential face of the rotor for supporting a next medicine container is formed so as not to change a position of the next medicine container due to the rotating movement.

13. (Currently Amended) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine containers in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the medicine containers in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette while in the linear array;

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette for holding one of the medicine containers in a holding recess portion and discharging the medicine containers one by one through rotating movement of the discharge member, wherein the discharge member includes a rotor; and

a control device for allowing driving of the rotor based on prescription data, wherein the control device is operable to automatically return the rotor to a standby position if a specified time has passed

while the rotor is positioned at a discharge position.

14. (Previously Presented) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine containers in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the medicine containers in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette while in the linear array; and

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette for holding one of the medicine containers in a holding recess portion and discharging the medicine containers one by one through rotating movement of the discharge member,

wherein the cassette is disposed so that housed medicine containers are arrayed in a horizontal direction so as to be discharged one by one in sequence from the one end side by the discharge member.

15. (Previously Presented) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine containers in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the medicine containers in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette while in the linear array; and

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette for holding one of the medicine containers in a holding recess portion and discharging the medicine containers one by one through rotating movement of the discharge member,

wherein the cassette is disposed so that the housed medicine containers are arrayed in a vertical direction so as to be discharged one by one in sequence from an upper end of the cassette by the

discharge member.

16. (Previously Presented) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine vials in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the medicine vials in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette while in the linear array; and

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette for holding one of the medicine vials in a holding recess portion and discharging the medicine vials one by one through rotating movement of the discharge member,

wherein the cassette is disposed so that the medicine vials, each of which has an upper aperture closed by a lid, are housed in a state of being arrayed in a horizontal direction in a standing position.

17. (Previously Presented) A medicine feeder, comprising:

a cassette for housing medicine containers in a linear array;

a biasing member for biasing the medicine containers in the cassette toward one end side of the cassette while in the linear array; and

a discharge member disposed on one end portion of the cassette for holding one of the medicine containers in a holding recess portion and discharging the medicine containers one by one through rotating movement of the discharge member,

wherein the discharge member comprises a rotor, and the cassette is structured so as to be mounted on and dismounted from each housing portion of a stock shelf and the cassette has a lock

member for preventing the rotor from rotating when the cassette is dismounted from the housing portion.

18. (Previously Presented) The medicine feeder as defined in claim 8, wherein the discharge member has notches to facilitate holding of the medicine, and the notches are located on opposite walls constituting the holding recess portion.

19. (Previously Presented) The medicine feeder as defined in claim 9, wherein the discharge member has notches to facilitate holding of the medicine, and the notches are located on opposite walls constituting the holding recess portion.